

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to salute the brave men and women of the Vermont National Guard, who will soon begin a year of service to our country in the rugged mountains and forbidding deserts of Afghanistan.

Tomorrow morning at Camp Johnson in Colchester, Vermonters will salute the first 35 Guardsmen and -women to leave the Green Mountain State and report for training at Fort Polk, Louisiana. They'll be followed shortly thereafter by all of the 1,400 Vermonters whose deployment will constitute the largest since World War II.

As we Vermonters bid a temporary farewell to our finest, their families and our communities will prepare to face the hardship of their absence. Yet our State can and will take pride in knowing that our loved ones and our friends and our neighbors who are devoting themselves to the service of our State and to all of the United States of America go with our support.

We stand proud to know that, as in every war since the Revolution, the Green Mountain Boys are serving our State and our country with strength, bravery, and honor.

We salute and look forward to your safe return.

RECOGNIZING SISTER TO SISTER

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to recognize a wonderful foundation, Sister to Sister, and its Miami Community Council.

Sister to Sister works year-round to bring heart awareness to thousands of women in south Florida. Its members educate women on the dangers of heart disease, which is the leading cause of death among women.

Sister to Sister will host its Miami Executive Women's Breakfast on November 18 in Key Biscayne, in my congressional district, to stimulate interest in the many women's heart health fairs throughout the years. These heart health fairs include free heart screenings as well as great information on preventing heart disease.

Sister to Sister's heart health fairs have been held in more than 20 cities, and more than 80,000 women have been screened.

I commend our local Sister to Sister organization for its hard work and compassion in the fight against heart disease and encourage all south Florida women to attend one of their heart health fairs.

Heart disease is a serious issue, and we can promote early detection and treatment.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF FORMER BORDER PATROL CHIEF GUSTAVO DE LA VINA

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission

to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, on October 26 of this year, this country lost a great public servant and defender of its borders, former Border Patrol Chief Gustavo De La Vina.

Known as "the Chief" to the people that he worked with, Chief De La Vina passed away this Monday while on assignment in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He was born and raised in Edinburg, Texas. He lived on the border and worked on the border all of his life. Entering the Border Patrol as an agent in 1970, he rose through the ranks and 27 years later was appointed our Chief of the Border Patrol. This was in 1997. And upon his retirement in 2004, we called upon the Chief again to serve, and he became an adviser to the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program within the Department of Justice.

My condolences go to his family and to the men and women who had the honor to serve with him in the uniform of green, who served with him for the last 34 years.

Gus, we will miss you.

HEALTH CARE BILL— CONSTITUTIONAL?

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the universal health care bill forces businesses and individuals to purchase health insurance. It raises at least two constitutional issues.

The Constitution doesn't give the Federal Government direct authority to compel the purchase of health insurance. So the Supreme Court would once again have to come in and by judicial edict give government the intrusive power to do what it obviously cannot do now: stretch the meaning of the Commerce Clause.

Can the Federal Government force people to buy health insurance whether they can afford it or not? Can the Federal Government then impose a criminal fine on them under the guise of calling it a tax if they fail to buy the insurance?

Then what happens if the citizen doesn't pay the fine? Do they go to jail without the benefit of trial by jury? Do they lose their right to confront witnesses and have a lawyer?

Congress's forcing mandatory health insurance on Americans and then imposing criminal sanctions without due process is a violation of the Constitution. This action would shock the Framers of our Constitution.

These serious constitutional issues cannot be ignored in the haste to have the government take over America's health.

And that's just the way it is.

STOP-LOSS PAYMENTS

(Mr. KLEIN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today with good news for our honorable servicemembers and their families in Florida and around our country.

Last week, the Defense Department announced that it will provide retroactive payments to servicemembers who had their enlistment extended or retirement suspended under the program known as Stop-Loss.

While our men and women never hesitate to serve when asked, Stop-Loss kept them away from their families for months or years longer than planned. That is why I'm so pleased that servicemembers will receive an extra \$500 for every month or part of a month they served under the Stop-Loss program. These payments are a small token of gratitude we feel toward the men and women of our military.

I look forward to working with all of our colleagues as we continue to ensure that our servicemembers have access to the full range of benefits they have earned.

MESSAGE FROM CONSTITUENTS: LESS SPENDING, LESS BORROWING, AND LESS GOVERNMENT

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, as I travel across Kansas, one common theme I hear from folks is their frustration with the amount of spending taking place in Washington. Rightfully so, millions of Americans are standing up to their elected officials and saying "enough is enough." Our national debt is closing in on \$12 trillion, almost \$39,000 owed by each man, woman, and child in the United States.

I applaud the millions of Americans who have chosen to exercise their constitutional right to free speech and have taken part in the TEA party protests. I am a sponsor of House Resolution 870, which expresses the appreciation of the House of Representatives for those who participated in the Taxpayer March on September 12, 2009, in Washington, D.C.

Congress has been issuing checks that our Nation can no longer afford, and I applaud the participants for sending a clear message: It's time for Washington to change its ways. Less spending, less borrowing, and less government.

HONORING SERGEANT NICKOLAS MUELLER

(Mr. KAGEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, it is with profound sadness that we commemorate the death of a Wisconsin native son, 26-year-old Sergeant Nickolas

Mueller, who was killed in action on October 26 during military operations in Afghanistan.

In 2002, a graduate of Little Chute High School, Sergeant Mueller was a member of the U.S. Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, stationed in Savannah, Georgia.

And after serving 2 years in Korea, Sergeant Mueller became crew chief on an elite Chinook helicopter unit, known as the Night Stalkers, whose duties included inserting and taking out our troops from dangerous territory.

That Sergeant Mueller was several times decorated is not surprising to those who knew him. In high school, he was a member of the Mustangs' football team and wrestling teams. He was a regular participant. He was the king of homecoming in 2001.

That he was entrusted with the highly technical responsibilities of a crew chief is not surprising either. Nick is remembered by his family and friends for his fearless willingness to accept any challenge.

On behalf of the people of northeast Wisconsin, we offer our deepest condolences to his mother and father, Sharon and Larry Mueller, and his brother, John.

Sergeant Nick Mueller shall not be forgotten.

NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

(Mrs. HALVORSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I stand today in support of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I stand today to recognize the thousands of individuals who have bravely fought this tragic disease. I stand today to also remember those who didn't make it.

There isn't a single person who doesn't know someone affected by this disease. I will always remember my mom's fight with breast cancer. I will never forget the doctor's visits and the medication, or my parents' struggles fighting doctor's payments when she was just trying to fight the cancer. Today, there are so many just like her who must suffer through this alone and without the resources necessary to win their battle.

It is up to us to be there for them and to support them through their tough times and it is up to us to encourage early screenings and to fight for better care. This month will come and go, but we must always recognize those afflicted with this disease and help them fight for what they need and for their lives.

PATRIOT ACT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, in just the last few weeks, we have seen the

FBI and local law enforcement thwart five separate terrorist attacks. Clearly, radical Islamic terrorists continue to be a serious threat to the safety and security of all Americans.

In one FBI sting, Hosam Smadi thought he was about to blow up a 60-story office tower in Dallas. When asked whether he wanted ear plugs, he declined saying that he wanted to hear the blast clearly. Not only was Smadi willing to take thousands of lives, he wanted to revel in the experience. To facilitate the arrest of Smadi and other terrorists, the FBI used surveillance enabled by the PATRIOT Act.

By the end of this year, three key surveillance provisions in the act will expire. If we want to ensure that the FBI is able to continue their critical mission of identifying and arresting terrorists before they strike, we must not take away these critical tools. Our law enforcement agencies are working hard to keep America safe, and the PATRIOT Act ensures that they are able to track and follow individuals who are working toward violent ends.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. ARCURI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, as we approach election day for many local and State elections across the country, I want to make certain that the issue of campaign finance reform is at the forefront of discussion on creating a cleaner and more accessible election system in this country. There is no doubt that our democracy here in the United States is the greatest in the world, but we need to make sure that we allow access to as many qualified citizens as possible to engage in this process.

Why should a candidate be judged on the quality of a television advertisement over the quality of their ideas to fix our Nation's economy or improve the flow of traffic through local town squares? Candidates should be elected based on merit, not on money.

In the last decade, an alliance of advocacy groups, the Fair Elections Coalitions, has been working to implement a public campaign finance system on the State level known as Clean Money, Clean Elections. Across the country, candidates have been elected based on this system, and I would hope that we can pass legislation here in Congress to reform the system fairly across the board.

As Members of Congress, we need to remember that we serve the people of this country based on issues, not dollars, and I would ask that my colleagues join me in a push toward campaign finance reform.

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(Mr. CONAWAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, it seems that the Obama administration has set its sights on yet another target of political dissension: the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber represents roughly 3 million businesses with more than 96 percent of its membership being comprised of small businesses of 100 employees or fewer, the very backbone of our economy.

The Chamber has expressed concern regarding various proposals, such as the regulation of greenhouse gases and a government-run health care plan, policies that, if enacted, would ultimately devastate small businesses across this country.

It appears that the Obama administration is actively circumventing the masses of members within the Chamber to try to craft side deals with a few individuals in an effort to persuade defections. It seems that it is all part of a grand strategy to marginalize a well-respected organization with legitimate policy differences.

When Barack Obama promised a new kind of politics, I don't believe a divide-and-conquer strategy based simply on disagreement with the American people is what the American people had in mind.

I encourage the Chamber to continue to stand up against any business policies, regardless of political pressure. The millions of businesses, many of which are located in my State and congressional district, will be grateful for their resolve.

ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ADDICTION

(Mr. KENNEDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, we have an elephant in the middle of our Nation's living room. That is alcoholism and drug addiction. This country's medical system does not deal with one of the major issues in this country, and that is alcoholism and drug addiction and depression and mental illness.

If we are going to do something about our health care system, we better incorporate treatment for these illnesses in order to make sure we prevent other diseases. If you have one of these illnesses, your cost for health care goes up four times. Seventy percent of the trauma care in this country is as a result of drug addiction and alcoholism. Car accidents, stabbings, gun shots, domestic violence, many of the things you see in our emergency rooms is as a result of drugs and alcohol.

That is why we need to make sure that we have early intervention and screening and treatment reimbursement in our health care bill.

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(Mr. BUCHANAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)